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ABSTRACT

The confluence of three major forces has given a new significance to nonformal education for the developing countries--denied educational opportunities and resource constraints, questions about the relevance of formal education, and growing awareness of the importance of lifelong education. The absence of inadequacies of concepts and priorities of rural development are a fundamental impediment to the progress of nonformal education because they should set the context for education, help define the educational tasks, and provide the criteria for assessing educational performance. Signs of progress in overcoming this obstacle are indicated in that economists and development planners have become disillusioned with the relentless pursuit of the growth of GNP and are making the elimination of problems of poverty one of the goals of development. Educational obstacles to the progress of nonformal education include: the narrowness of the concept of education; fragmentation of organization and program; resource problems; problems of knowledge, techniques, and capabilities; and the responsibilities of international agencies. Major features of the new learning system, if continued progress is made, will be: wider distribution of education and structural flexibility, freedom of education from lock-steps of levels and grades, enlargement of educational resources, shared responsibilities between schools and employing agencies for occupational preparation, and local variations and flexibility. (KM)

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NONFORMAL EDUCATION: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS[1]

Widespread interest has stirred up recently in nonformal education[2] as a potential means of tackling the educational lags and deficiencies of the less developed countries. An indication of this interest is a major international research project of the International Council for Educational Development, focusing on the role and functions of nonformal education in achieving the goals of rural development in the developing countries. While for obvious reasons the conclusions of this still on-going study cannot be reported on at this date, there are a number of premises and generalizations which come to the fore and are gaining acceptance among increasing numbers of operators and designers of educational programs of both formal and nonformal varieties. Some of these, presented in this paper, relate to the significance of nonformal education, the major obstacles to the progress of nonformal education as well as some promising trends; and the outlook for nonformal education in the context of the development of the total education system.

I. SIGNIFICANCE OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION

The confluence of three major forces has given a new significance to nonformal education for the developing countries.

A. Denied educational opportunities and resource constraints

Since the early 1960s governments of most countries in the three less developed regions of the world - Asia, Africa, and Latin America - have launched heroic efforts to make the primary level of education as close to universal

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[1]The writer is indebted for much of the substance of this paper to his colleagues in the Nonformal Education Project of the International Council for Educational Development, particularly to Project Director Philip H. Coombs. The writer alone is responsible for the views expressed in this paper.

[2]Nonformal education is defined as any organized educational activity carried on outside the graded, age-specific, and diploma-oriented formal system. Nonformal programs may be designed as supplement, follow-up or substitute to formal programs. Examples of prevalent nonformal programs include agricultural extension and farmer training programs, home economics courses for girls, youth club programs with substantial educational objectives, literacy programs, occupational skill training for youths and adults, and health, nutrition, and family-planning programs.

as possible and as soon as possible.[3] Impressive progress has been made since then in these regions in expanding primary education. Between 1960 and 1968, total enrolment in these regions (excluding Mainland China) increased by over 50 percent (See Table 1). Yet 46 percent of primary school-age children are estimated to be currently out of school in the developing countries.[4]

Table 1. Progress in Primary Education Enrolment, 1960/61 - 1967/68

	Enrolment in Primary Education (in thousands)		Percentage of Primary Age-Group Enroled	
	1960/61	1967/68	1960/61	1967/68
Asia*	87,236	132,567	50	55
Africa	18,931	29,322	34	40
Latin	26,973	40,751	60	75

*Excluding People's Republic of China, North Korea and North Vietnam.

Source: Unesco Office of Statistics

But even this is an underestimation of the problem, because the usual educational statistics hide serious deficiencies of the formal system in the form of very high drop-out, repetition and the gross urban-rural disparities in enrolment, not to mention the fact that many remain virtually illiterate even after officially completing the primary cycle.

[3]Note Unesco-sponsored international conferences of Ministers of Education in Karachi (1960), Addis Ababa (1961) and Santiago (1962) where regional plans for achieving universal primary education by 1970 in Latin America and by 1980 in Asia and Africa were adopted.

[4]International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Education Sector Working Paper, Sept. 1971, p. 19.

A Unesco study in Latin America in the 1960s indicates the extent of drop-out and repetition and the sharp urban-rural difference. (See statistics for Colombia as a sample in Table 2). In Colombia, for example, of every 1,000 urban children starting primary school in 1962, 273 could be expected to complete five grades in urban areas and only 37 would do so in the rural areas.[5]

The quantitative measures of wastage say nothing about the quality of the lessons taught. An experienced observer in Thailand asserts that a large number of those who complete the four-year primary cycle in that country is functionally illiterate and the majority lapses into illiteracy three years after completing the

Table 2
Promotion, Repetition, and Dropout Rates in Primary Schools Shown for Urban and Rural Areas in Colombia (1965)

Grade		Urban # (per 1000 students)	Urban % repeating or dropping out	Rural # (per 1000 students)	Rural % repeating or dropping out
1	Promotion	648	35	382	62
	Repetition	202		299	
	Dropout	150		319	
2	Promotion	175	23	274	73
	Repetition	171		256	
	Dropout	54		470	
3	Promotion	776	22	401	60
	Repetition	148		165	
	Dropout	76		434	
4	Promotion	820	18	480	52
	Repetition	114		115	
	Dropout	66		405	

Source: Unesco. Statistical Measurement of Educational Wastage, Drop-out, Repetition and School Retardation. Prepared for the International Conference on Education, 32nd Session, Geneva, 1-9 July 1970 (Paris: June 24, 1970 - ED/BIE/CONFINTED 32/Ref. 1), pp. D-II-44-45.

[5] An aggregate measure of "wastage" as a result of drop-out and repetition is the ratio of total number of student years invested per successful graduate and the duration of the cycle. Mean value of this ratio is 2.00 in Africa, 1.90 in Latin America and 1.31 in Asia - the ideal ratio of course, is 1.00. Source: Unesco Office of Statistics.

fourth grade.[6] In a Latin American country, 54 percent students who had six years of primary education were below the normal 4th grade achievement level in their reading and writing abilities.[7]

Measuring total resources devoted by a country to its education is an almost impossible task. Unesco's estimate is that total educational expenditure in the world in 1960 was US$ 54,400 million or 3.02 percent of world Gross National Product and rose to US$ 131,600 million or 4.24 percent of world GNP (excluding Mainland China) in 1968. Public education expenditure during these years grew much faster than the rate of increase of student enrolment. (See Table 3).

Table 3. Annual Percentage Increase of School Enrolment and Public Educational Expenditure, 1960-68

	Annual % increase in enrolment at all levels 1960-68	Annual % increase in Public spending 1960-68	1967-68
Asia (excluding Mainland China)	5.6	14.1	12.6
Africa	6.2	10.0	9.2
Latin America	6.2	11.3	10.8

Source: Unesco Office of Statistics cited by the International Commission on the Development of Education.

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[6]Nicholas Bennett, "The Need for Educational Transformation: From the Marginal to the Utopian," Paper presented to the Advanced Training Seminar on Educational Planning and Management, The Asian Institute for Planning and Administration, New Delhi, Nov. 20 - Dec. 2, 1972.

[7]ICED field notes.

It is difficult to believe that this rate of increase in educational expenditure can be sustained indefinitely by the developing nations. A slowing-down is probably already emerging as the 1967-68 increase in educational budget (which is less than the mean annual increase for 1960-68 in all three regions) suggests (see Table 3).

The squeeze on resources and the wastage factors make it difficult for most of the developing countries to offer within the foreseeable future the conventional primary school opportunities to all members of the age-group. But there is an additional exacerbating factor -- the high rate of population growth. This rate is typically close to three percent per year in developing nations compared to 1.40 percent in North America and 1.01 percent in Europe-USSR during 1960-68. Population growth alone requires two to three percent addition to school facilities in the less developed countries. In addition, the resultant demographic structure imposes additional resource constraints in the form of a high proportion of young dependents demanding educational and other services from a relatively small work force.[8]

The aggregate statistics presented above hide the extremes of educational deprivation in the least developed countries and the least developed regions of countries where 10 to 20 percent of children or even less can effectively enjoy the benefits of primary schools.

B. Questions about the relevance of formal education

Questions have arisen regarding the relevance of the content and method of formal primary and secondary schools to the needs of the majority of young people in developed countries. These schools are typically oriented to preparing students for the next higher level of formal education instead of preparing them for life, even though only a small fraction of primary school leavers can and do go to the secondary and higher levels. Notice, for instance, the fact particularly evident in Africa, that the expansion of primary school

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[8] Population under 20 constitutes 52 percent of the total in India, 53 percent in Brazil and 57 percent in Colombia compared to 38 percent in USA, 33 percent in Japan and 28 percent in Sweden. Statistical Office of the U.N. Demographic Yearbook, 1970, New York. United Nations, 1971.

enrolment invariably leads to pressure for more places in secondary schools and ultimately in the universities. Meanwhile, jobs that required a primary certificate begin to ask for a secondary or even a college certificate, further increasing the pressure on progressively higher levels of formal schooling. The organization and processes of schools have proved to be highly resistant to attempts in various countries to make the primary and the secondary stages "terminal."

The contents of formal curricula are often remarkably unrelated to the learners' environment and realities and the development needs of rural areas. Though many countries have been attempting curricular and methods reform, science, civics, and even agriculture continue to be taught from the pages of text b-oks inside a classroom rather than from the living nature and the community just beyond the school windows. In many West African nations teaching in primary schools takes place in French instead of the language of the students.

By its very structure and methodology, a formal school is designed to satisfy only a part of what may be defined as a package of minimum learning needs for youths preparing for adult roles in a developing country. Without going into elaborate academic arguments, it can be said that the elements of such a minimum package will include, with great local variations in details: a) basic communication skills - reading, wirting, speech, and calculation; b) initiation into the world of work; c) knowledge and understanding required for building a wholesome and healthy home environment and family life; and d) skills and understanding needed for performing civic and community responsibilities. Under the best of circumstances, formal schools help to acquire only the communication skills and barely scratch the surface of the others. Consequently, even if formal primary education expands to serve the entire primary school age-group and its quality is substantially improved, many elements of the minimum learning requirements for youths would still remain unsatisfied.

And what happens to the vast numbers of young people left out of schools so far and who are to be left out or dropped out in the future? In East Africa, 70 percent of new entrants to the labor force have had no primary education or have had only an incomplete primary course. Most of these workers will remain in the labor force in the year 2000 as unskilled illiterate subsistence farmers or semi-employed slum-dwellers unless some measures are taken.

Formal schools, with their de facto discrimination against the most disadvantaged and the poorest, have helped to perpetuate or even accentuate the social inequities and injustices instead of serving as the great equalizer of opportunities they were meant to be. This discrimination arises from the fact that many young people are in the first place left out of the formal system; then, its structure and content are geared to the needs of those small proportions of students who go on to higher levels of education, thus in fact shoving by the wayside all but those who proceed to higher levels. And the lucky ones usually turn out to be ones with inherited social and economic privileges even when conscious efforts are made by the educational system to equalize educational opportunities.[9]

C. Growing awareness of the importance of life-long education

The concept of education as limited in time (to "school age") and confined in space (to school buildings) is beginning to be questioned. We have noted that two large population groups, consisting of those who never go to a school and those who go to school and drop out early, are not helped any way by the formal school. Then there are other large groups including those who complete a relatively high level of education but are hardly equipped for the world of work or even adult life, those who find their training ill adapted to the economic opportunities, and those in jobs needing new knowledge and skills in order to adapt to technical progress. Existing formal schools are of little help to these groups. All of these groups need educational opportunities which must go beyond the traditional age-range for formal courses. The notion that one has to accumulate all his educational credit between the ages of five and twenty and that this would serve him for the rest of his life is obsolete in today's fast pace of economic and social changes.

Confining education to a specific age-span as a full-time activity imposes unnecessary rigidities on the educational process, deprives many of educational opportunities and accentuates the artificial remoteness of education from life and society. What is significant about the idea of life-

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[9] A.H. Halsey, "Education and Social Change," (Paris, Unesco, 1972, document of the International Commission on Educational Development, Opinions Series 51).

long education is not so much the actual provisions of educational opportunities that will make life-long education a reality -- only because this desirable goal is not easily achievable -- but the concept itself that helps break the rigid structures of formal schools and spur thoughts on possible alternatives.

The nonformal alternatives to the traditional formal schools can, at least potentially, serve many learning needs which otherwise would remain unserved. There are inherent advantages in nonformal education which make it potentially more effective where formal institutions have proved unsuitable. These advantages are: a) the high flexibility of nonformal education and its adaptability to local circumstances, to changing needs, to the convenience of its clients, and to virtually any type of subject matter and learning objectives; b) its freedom to try new and unconventional approaches (making it even a useful experimental laboratory for formal education); c) its ability to mobilize and utilize (often at low cost or no cost) a wide range of human talent not ordinarily available or acceptable to formal education, and to make off-hour use of existing physical facilities at considerable saving in capital costs; d) its potential for tapping many different sources of support, public and private; and e) its freedom from rigid, standardized admissions requirements and similar constraints of formal education, giving it the capacity to serve all people, regardless of their age and educational background.

II. OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION AND SOME PROMISING SIGNS

Despite the potentialities and advantages of nonformal education, its progress in developing nations has been slow. Many obstacles stand in the way of nonformal programs' playing a more prominent role in the total educational scene of these nations.

Since deficiencies in formal education are most glaringly evident in rural areas of the developing countries, and national development is largely a rural development problem in these predominantly rural countries, educational change must focus on remedying the deficiencies of rural education and on ways of making education more attuned to the needs of rural development. This is especially so when one considers the role of nonformal education, because much of the irrelevance of traditional formal education to rural situations and its neglect of rural needs can be remedied by incorporating nonformal programs into the rural learning system. An essential precondition, therefore, for systematic progress of nonformal education are clear concepts of goals and criteria of rural development and definition of priorities in national development plans.

Unfortunately, a clear view of the goals and priorities in rural development does not exist in most countries even though their national plan documents often routinely proclaim the importance of rural development. In many countries with relatively high growth rate of the Gross National Product (GNP) during the past two decades, the rural areas have been used as the supplier of raw materials and cheap labor for the growth of the modern sector and urban industries. In the allocation of development funds, the balance has been almost always tilted in favor of the industries and the urban areas. Moreover, rural development has tended to be equated with mere agricultural growth with little regard for other basic goals of development -- generation of employment; equitable distribution of income; improvement in health, nutrition, and housing, etc.

The absence or inadequacies of concepts and priorities of rural development stand as a fundamental impediment because these should set the context for education, help define the educational tasks, and provide the criteria of assessing educational performance.

Signs of progress towards overcoming this obstacle are becoming evident. Economists and development planners have become disillusioned with the relentless pursuit of the growth of GNP which has been the cornerstone of development policy in the non-socialist countries for the past quarter century. Here is the confession of one such chaser of GNP:

> It is time that we stand economic theory on its head and see if we get any better results... First, the problem of development must be defined as a selective attack on the worst form of poverty.

> Development goals must be defined in terms of progressive reduction and eventual elimination of malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, squalor, unemployment, and inequalities... let us worry about the content of GNP even more than its rate of increase.

He goes on to suggest that the development goals of the less developed nations should also be defined in terms of a minimum (or threshold) consumption standards that must be reached in a decade or so; that the problems of distribution should be given as much weight as the concern for more production in development planning; and that employment generation should be a primary objective of planning.[10]

Such redefinition of development objectives and criteria, also advocated by the United Nations in its statement of strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, inevitably directs the focus of development planning to the needs and problems of all-round rural development in the less developed world.[11]

One of the fundamental problems of rural development is that each rural region is unique in its problems, needs, resources and potentialities and no standard development program designed by the national planning commission fits the region. Experiments with integrated rural development projects in several countries with assistance from international and bilateral agencies are attempts to deal with this problem. In these projects, a manageable and relatively homogeneous geographical area is taken as a unit of planning and implementation of all-round phased development of the area and the necessary management structure and institutions are built up within the area. The necessary educational and skill development programs are designed in the context of the overall development plan and goals of the region. The management system for development for the region may begin as an highly authoritarian organization directed mostly by outsiders from the area; but usually the eventual goal is to give the local people a central role in planning, decision-making and implementation of the development program.

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[10] Mahbub-ul-Haq, "Employment in 1970s? A New Perspective." Presentation at the 12th World Conference of the Society for International Development, 16-19 May 1971, Ottawa, Canada.

[11] United Nations General Assembly, 17 October 1970, "An International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade."

An example of an integrated rural development project is CADU in the Chilalo District of Ethiopia. Launched in 1968 with technical and financial assistance from the Swedish International Development Agency, the project aims at improving the life of 400,000 people in the area through the coordinated management of agriculture, education, health and nutrition and institutional and physical infrastructure development programs. Similar projects in other areas, which differ greatly in specific details and emphases but resemble in the basic goal of testing and developing the organization and methodology of regional rural development, include the Comilla Academy for Rural Development project in Bangladesh, the Lilongwe Project in Malawi, and the PACCA project in Afghanistan.

Several countries are endeavoring to achieve a greater coordination among development programs and agencies at national, regional, and local levels as well as to decentralize the project preparation phase of development planning at least. These countries, in a sense, are trying to achieve on a national scale some of the goals of the integrated regional development projects, i.e., bringing the bureaucratically fragmented activities of the national government together to bear upon the problems of rural areas and to delegate planning and implementation responsibilities closer to the village. In the Indian Community Development Program, for instance, the country has been divided into Blocks (of 70,000 to 100,000 people) where an interdisciplinary team of development specialists under a Block Development Officer is posted; a village level worker serves about 10 villages as a multi-purpose development agent, and a three-tier Panchayat (local council) structure with representative bodies at the local, block, and district levels permits the local people to play a role in the planning and execution of community development actions in their area.

In Kenya, an inter-ministerial National Rural Development Committee considers all development programs which affect rural life. Similarly in the district, a district development committee of district officials and a district development advisory committee of public representatives help plan and implement the district level development programs. A national Board of Adult Education and district adult education committees serve more or less as technical committees with respect to nonformal education for the national and district development coordination bodies.

These organizational, administrative, and methodological experiments, examples of which can be found in other countries than those mentioned above, are helping to dispel the lack of clarity about the means and content of rural development, in turn clarifying the role of nonformal education, and establishing its linkage with other development actions.

Other specifically "educational" obstacles to the progress of nonformal education can be grouped under the following

major categories.

A. Narrowness of the concept of education

We have noted that education is too often equated with schooling -- with all its structural and methodological rigidities. Typically, educational planning means the planning of formal schooling; educational data provide statistics relating to school programs; and problems of educational resources are considered in relation only to formal education within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.

Most countries, however, have launched sporadic and isolated programs through a variety of government agencies (usually other than the Ministries of Education), and through voluntary and private efforts aimed at bridging the enormous educational gaps left by the formal system, particularly in serving rural people who are the overwhelming majority of the population of the less developed countries.

But these programs remain limited in their impact. There is no attempt to view all of these activities -- along with the formal system -- as forming a total educational effort that can be developed and shaped to meet the totality of educational requirements of a country.

Several countries are trying to break loose from this narrow view of education. Tanzania, for example, has outlined a strategy for building a nationwide learning system which includes the formal graded system and planned activities beyond formal schooling designed to develop the skills, knowledge, capacities, and attitudes of the population. This strategy is expected to lead ultimately and progressively to the elimination of the sharp distinction between formal and nonformal programs.

The educational reform law of Peru, promulgated in 1972, goes beyond pedagogic reforms in formal schools and envisages structural changes in the total learning system, accepts the principle of life-long education, and proclaims the right of each individual to education that would be provided by a variety of formal and nonformal means. The law seeks to break away from traditional educational programs confined to "a formal teaching operation linking pupil and master through a one-way relationship limited in time on both sides."[12]

A committee for "education sector review" in Ethiopia has suggested a development strategy for education that envisages basic structural changes in the first and second levels of formal education and a prominent and parallel role for nonformal

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[12] International Commission on the Development of Education, Learning to be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow. Paris, Unesco, 1972, p. 182.

education.[13]

B. Fragmentation of organization and program

At least half a dozen ministries and numerous private and semi-public agencies offer various kinds of educational programs which can be categorized as nonformal. This division of responsibility, by itself, is not the problem; rather, the multiplicity of initiatives and effort can infuse vigor, efficiency, and realism in these programs, provided the different organizations can work within a common framework of educational objectives and tasks complementing each other's programs.

The problem arises when different organizations launch their own programs without any coordination and any effort to educational needs of a country or a region. The result of this is duplication, wastage of resources and energy, and working at cross purposes while the needs of large numbers of potential clients remain unsatisfied. To take a typical example, a ministry or department of youth affairs, a department of adult education, and an agency for agricultural extension might organize, sponsor, or support in the same rural region, a number of nonformal educational activities which would have a large measure of overlap in clientele, contents of program, and objectives. The programs of all three organizations would most likely serve, at least partially, the out-of-school rural adolescents, attempt to remedy the general educational deficiencies of the clients and equip them with some occupational skills, and generally aim at helping the clients live a more productive and meaningful life in the rural community. But even if such different organizations offer programs with distinct contents and objectives, for the client, these should together form a coherent whole in terms of his own educational needs. Yet, more often than not, the organizers of different programs fail to work within a common framework derived from the assessment of total educational needs.

There have been, however, attempts to override such fragmentation of effort. Kenya's Adult Education Board, as noted above, is a mechanism of coordination and provides a common framework of policies and strategies for nonformal education, though at present coordination is hampered by the fact that activitied defined as "youth programs" such as Village Polytechnics are outside the Board's jurisdiction.

In India the ministries of agriculture, education, and information are cooperating at the national, state, and district levels to conduct a coordinated young farmer training program with several educational components -- functional literacy,

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[13] Imperial Ethiopian Government, Ministry of Education, Education: Challenge to the Nation. Summary Report of the Education Sector Review, Addis Ababa, August 1972.

residential and extension training in agriculture, and radio broadcasts.

C. Resource Problems

The magnitude of resources allocated to nonformal education is difficult to assess because data for expenditure and other types of resources devoted to nonformal education are simply not obtainable without undertaking detailed investigation of all nonformal programs country-by-country. On the basis of ICED's research and field observations on nonformal education -- mainly by noting the scale and character of the principal programs of nonformal education, by looking at the formal education budget, and by spotchecking urban and rural educational activities in a sample of developing nations -- the following generalizations can be made:

-- The public resources allocated to nonformal education are meager compared to those for formal education. And they are especially meager for programs in rural areas, where they are devoted largely to programs for adults and for young people who are still attending school. Programs to meet the needs of the out-of-schoolers -- who constitute the great majority of young people -- are very scarce.

-- Potential resources for nonformal education in rural areas are substantially underutilized or untapped. Among these are various physical facilities and equipment that could be used in spare hours; the expertise of local master craftsmen, progressive farmers, entrepreneurs, and government specialists posted in rural communities which could be harnessed for part-time instructional programs; and educated but underemployed adolescents and young adults who could share their general education with others.

-- External assistance agencies have tended to reinforce the lopsided pattern of educational resource allocations of national governments, and assistance for nonformal education has gone disproportionately to urban areas. Also external assistance has generally been on a pilot scale with relatively short periods of assured support, leaving in doubt the long-term continuity and expansion of such projects.

The allocation of educational resources to take advantage of the potentialities of nonformal education will have to follow the adoption of a broader concept of education and new educational development strategies that recognize the appropriate role of nonformal education. Meanwhile, nonformal programs in different countries are demonstrating how limited educational resources can be stretched to go a little further and how some unconventional sources can be tapped.

Nonformal programs generally do without separate physical facilities of their own. A mobile trade training program in Thailand and Vocational Improvement Centers in Northern Nigeria offering mechanical and trade courses to urban and rural youths use borrowed buildings that have other regular use. A nation-wide radio network, combined with weekly newspapers, low-cost high-volume textbooks and readers, and correspondence brings to thousands of Colombia's campesinos educational opportunities that would be prohibitively costly to offer otherwise. Volunteers are extensively used in nonformal programs such as the Office of Rural Development program in South Korea, literacy corps in Iran, Sarvodaya rural self-help movement in Ceylon, and Colombia's ACPO. ACPO incidentally, derives a large part of its operating costs from its own revenues. A rural agricultural and vocational training project in Diyagala Boy's Town near Colombo is almost entirely self-financing. A large share of costs for the Comprehensive Youth Education Program in East Java's Jombang District is generated from its own activities.

D. Problems of knowledge, techniques, and capabilities.

One consequence of the failure to recognize the role of nonformal education in a comprehensive educational strategy and which is now a serious impediment to attempts to remedy the situation is absence of a body of knowledge about nonformal education. The subject of pedagogy and more recently the systematic efforts to develop and accumulate knowledge in educational planning have been evolved largely in the context of formal education. As a result there is little in the literature about the underlying assumptions and principles of nonformal education, techniques of planning nonformal programs, building and appraising alternative models of such programs. And there is a dearth of systematic research and academic efforts to generate this knowledge. There is also no forum or means for collecting, disseminating, and exchanging useful experiences and information on nonformal education on an international, or even inter-regional basis. There are, for example, few specific guides on methods of taking inventory, building strategies, designing and redesinging projects and programs, and evaluating existing programs. The most serious consequence of this situation is the scarcity of planners and managers of nonformal education programs, and the absolute lack of the means to recruit and develop these personnel.

On the other hand, activities by the countries mentioned above are helping to build a body of knowledge and developing personnel capabilities. A significant amount of cross-country transfer in concepts and principles has taken place in respect to the integrated rural development projects. International and bilateral agencies are helping by sponsoring and supporting

studies such as the ones by ICED.[14]

Several regional conferences have been sponsored recently to assess and compare experiences and ideas on nonformal education. These include a UNICEF-sponsored conference on West African nations in Lome to consider the educational strategy for children, adolescents, and women; a Unesco-sponsored conference on nonformal education for youths in Bangkok, an Organization of American States conference on out-of-school education in Buenos Aires, all in 1972. The Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group of the Asia Society held a series of international seminars on the prospects of nonformal education in 1971. Nonformal education was a major agenda item in the Bellagio Conference of the heads of aid agencies held in May 1972.[15]

E. Responsibilities of International Agencies

Organizations in the U.N. family and bilateral agencies have been in the vanguard of sponsoring nonformal education programs in the developing countries. But even when they have assisted nonformal education; they have operated with specialized biases generally bound by their jurisdictional limits and protocols of relationship with a counterpart national ministry. The lack of a comprehensive strategy and a broad concept for education in national governments has been reflected in the operation of the international agencies. They have been unable to take an interdisciplinary view of the development problem in a region and have generally failed to establish the linkages between the educational program and other development activities in the area.

Of late, attention of international and bilateral agencies has gradually drifted towards the potentialities of nonformal education. They have become increasingly aware of the limitations of the narrow project-by-project approach to development and have been searching for ways of breaking the jurisdictional and departmental barriers within the agencies themselves and in national governments.

The International Commission on Development of Education (known as the Faure Commission) established by UNESCO has called for life-long education to be accepted as the "master concept for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries." It has also urged that "artificial or outmoded barriers between different educational disciplines, courses and levels, and between formal and nonformal

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[14]Studies of nonformal education by ICED are funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, United Nations Children's Fund and the Ford Foundation. The African-American Institute, supported by US AID funds, has produced a useful survey titled Nonformal Education in African Development (by James R. Sheffield and Victor P. Diejomaoh, New York, the Institute, 1972).

[15]Education and Development Reconsidered, 2 volumes, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation, New York, May 1972.

education should be abolished."[16]

UNICEF, in a recent policy shift, has decided to concentrate its attention to the educational needs of young people "where there are the greatest deficiencies in basic or minimum standards of education" through nonformal educational programs.[17]

Most of the loans processed by Education Projects Department of the World Bank so far have been for formal education. But the Bank anticipates "significant expansion"[18] of its activities in the field of nonformal education for out-of-school children and youth and adults over the next few years.

ILO is paying more attention to designing new rural programs and FAO is expanding its programs for rural youths. Similar changes are also becoming noticeable among the bilateral agencies.

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[16]The International Commission on the Development of Education, op. cit., pp. 182 and 189.

[17]UNICEF, "Education -- Reorientation of UNICEF Policy," 25 August, 1972, p. 3.

[18]IBRD, Education Sector Working Paper, p. 20.

III. FUTURE PROSPECTS

If the premises in section I are accepted and the promising leads described in section II are pursued by national governments and international agencies the profoundest changes will take place in the area of formal education. It has been argued in the preceding pages that the educational crisis of the developing world cannot be resolved by an expanded or even reformed formal system. But neither can a proliferation of nonformal programs remedy these educational gaps and deficienceis. Rather, a new combination of means, methods and resources is called for in proportion to the magnitude of the educational task.

The greatest significance of the current attention to nonformal education probably lies in the fact that this will lead to a more balanced view of education, bringing in its wake a broadening of the range of options regarding ways of achieving educational objectives. In fact, in the context of a comprehensive learning system the dichotomy of formal and nonformal will be meaningless except as arbitrary and convenient labels. In such a system, existing formal schools will become less "formal" and a large share of the total educational task for a country will be borne by what are now nonformal programs. Major features of the new learning syster - in contrast to the present narrowly conceived educational system - are outlined below.

A. Wider distribution of education and structural flexibility

Education will be distributed on a wider scale by being spread over time, space, age groups, and administrative sponsorships.

For example, the Adult Education Division of the Ministry of Education in Thailand operates a program by which youths who have completed only four years of primary education and have not proceeded to, or dropped out from the next level can acquire the equivalence of seventh and tenth grade certificates by attending part-time after-hour courses of 18-month duration. The rates of failure and drop-out in these courses are reported to be slightly less than the rates in three-year courses in the regular daytime program. The same division runs a one-year literacy course which offers to adults the equivalent of a four-year curriculum for the primary school children. Both of these programs have not only cut the duration of the courses substantially, but also made educational opportunities available to those who otherwise would be without education.

In Upper Volta, where formal primary education has not been available to most of the rural population, a three-year basic rural educational program for youths between 14 to 18 years has been in operation since 1961. In the better-managed of these rural education centers, the young people have not only learned the essentials of what is taught in the regular primary schools, but also acquired enough agricultural knowledge to earn a living in the rural community -- all of this at an overall cost less than that of the regular primary school.

We are all aware of many technological developments that can free learning from the constraints of space, make it available wherever it is convenient for the learner, and permit him to proceed at his own pace. This flexibility also can bring learning within the reach of many who cannot take advantage of the formal schools.

B. Freedom of education from lock-steps of levels and grades

Education will be freed from the lock-steps of graded stages that force each stage to lead inevitably to the next stage.

Formal education has become a self-justifying and self-fulfilling exercise with the final examination and the requirements of promotion to the next stage dominating the content and method of the program. It is, however, not inconceivable that entrance to second and third levels of education will not necessarily require predetermined formal qualifications as prerequisites.

"Second chance" programs are in existence in a number of countries. Thailand offers a second chance to reenter the formal system at a higher level after acquiring qualifications outside the regular schools. The People's Republic of China encourages people from rural and working class background, many with deficient formal qualifications, to enter higher education institutions, where special preparatory courses and individualized attention at the initial phase of the program are offered.

Finally, parallel programs outside formal schools such as the University of the Air in Britain, correspondence courses, and credits granted for on-the-job experience, can allow motivated learners to acquire the equivalence of formal higher qualifications in a variety of ways.

C. Enlargement of educational resources

Educational resources and means will be multiplied by turning the whole community and its institutions into vehicles of learning.

In the Jombang district of East Java, for example, an imaginative district administrator has found ways of utilizing for the comprehensive youth education program of the district the departments of health, agriculture, cooperatives, fishery and the district administrative staff in addition to the local Boy Scout organization (the Pramuka), primary and secondary schools, the teacher training center, and the community development organization. The program -- designed largely for out-of-school youths with the diverse objectives of leadership training, agricultural and vocational skill development, training young settlers for North Borneo settlements, and educating girls for better home and family -- has also drawn upon the voluntary service and in-kind contribution from community members and has met a part of its costs by accumulating a revolving fund and running a number of small cooperative enterprises.

Possibilities of communication technology for stretching educational resources and widening the reach of education have hardly been exploited so far in the developing countries. We have noted the creative use of a combination of mass media in Colombia for expanding nonformal educational opportunities. Correspondence courses in several East African countries offer a relatively low-cost alternative means for acquiring a variety of educational qualifications.[19] Television has been used in a number of countries, notably Ivory Coast and Costa Rica, as a potentially lower cost alternative to traditional teaching.

D. Shared responsibilities for occupational preparation

Preparation for specific occupations will largely take place outside schools with responsibilities borne largely by the employing agencies, freeing schools to concentrate on the tools of learning and preparing learners for taking

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19 Lars-Olof Edstrom, Renee Erdos and Roy Prosser, Mass Education: Studies in Adult Education and Teaching by Correspondence in Some Developing Countries, Stockholm, Almquist and Wiksell and the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 1970.

advantage of various out-of-school and on-the-job learning opportunities.

Formal schools have proved to be remarkably unadaptable to the needs of occupational training. Continuous changes in production techniques, structure of the economy, pattern of employment and system of incentives -- particularly in a developing economy -- make it an impossible task for formal schools to keep up with the training specifications for jobs.

On the other hand, formal schools are better equipped to build the base of general education for young learners allowing them to achieve optimum mobility in employment as well as out-of-school specialized occupational training opportunities.

Japan, for instance, despite its advanced general and technical education facilities, has a highly organized and extensive system of technical and vocational training supported by commerce and industry. Under vocational training program, authorized by the Ministry of Labor, business enterprises share with the government responsibilities for 407 training centers with over 100,000 trainees. In addition, the large firms have training programs of their own to provide initial training for new employees, upgrading and retraining of skilled workers, supervisory training and management development courses.[20]

E. Local variations and adaptability

The organized learning system embracing a wide variety of formal and nonformal programs with diverse objectives will be characterized by great flexibility in order to adapt to the changing educational needs over time and for different localities.

Attempts to impose nationwide uniformity of curriculum, methods, teaching qualifications, and standards such as those that exist today in many educational systems will defeat the very purpose of a broadly conceived learning system.

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[20] International Commission on the Development of Education, op. cit. p. 199.

The idea of a comprehensive learning system organized at a local level as a local responsibility finds expression in the educational functions of the Chinese commune.

> The commune, as an administrative and geographical unit for social and economic development, is responsible for basic education of the commune population. This responsibility is discharged through a variety of institutions and facilities providing essentially the entire population of opportunity for some form of useful education. Three basic categoreis can be discerned in the wide range of educational programs offered in a commune: primary level education for children and its counterpart for illiterate and semi-literate adults, aimed at basic literacy; middle-level specialized education combining specific training, production work and applied research to solve specific local problems; and various kinds of in-service training in "red and expert universities" and spare-time educational facilities, aimed at developing a cadre of rural leadership to guide and participate in party and commune activities.[21]

In societies without a comparable ideological motivation and the absence of a large revolutionary cadre, it is difficult to imagine a commune structure pervading all important aspects of community life. Yet in such societies the role of the national or regional government can be of taking "enabling" measures for communities and districts to put together the means and ends of their own educational programs instead of just "inspecting" and policing the implementation of a program imposed upon the communities from above.

The prospects foreseen above for the emergence of a comprehensive learning system with a prominent role of nonformal education will not automatically become a reality. The examples of nonformal programs cited in this paper, though indicative of the future possibilities, are by no means free from many operational difficulties and even conceptual unclarity - and their overall impacts in the respective countries are still insignificant. It will take a sustained and concerted effort by nations and international agencies - arising out of a sense of educational crisis now commonly shared, before the impacts of the new visions of education are felt in any significant manner in these nations.

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[21] International Council for Educational Development, "Education for Rural Development in People's Republic of China," (by Dr. Hsiang-po-Lee), Background paper no. 3, Essex, Connecticut, June 1972, p. VII.

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